

## Frequently asked questions:

### **If I have a problem at my child's school, will a call to one of my ward trustees help fix the problem?**

Problems can arise but usually can be solved by open discussion. The steps to follow are:

- Talk to the teacher first
- If you can't resolve the issue—talk to the principal
- If you can't settle the issue—talk to the superintendent
- If you can't settle the issue—talk to the chief superintendent
- If you can't settle the issue—then contact your local trustees

### **How do I contact the Board of Trustees?**

You can write a letter addressed to: 1577 Wall St. East, Winnipeg, MB, R3E 2S5 or fax it to: 774-6211 or you can e-mail to: board@wsd1.org. If you are a resident, a parent of a Division student or a Division student, you may appear as a delegation to the Board of Trustees. To appear, you must contact the Board Administrative Assistant by noon the Thursday prior to the Board meeting: phone 775-0231.

### **Does the Board consult others before making decisions?**

The Board engages in a rigorous consultation process to best serve the needs of the students. Depending upon the issue, the Board may distribute a specific document for feedback (i.e. a proposed policy, position paper or budget consultation paper). The groups that feedback is requested from depend on the relevance of the subject (i.e. schools, parent councils, student councils,

board advisory committees and employee groups).

### **When are Board meetings held?**

The Board holds regular meetings the first and third Mondays of the month at 7:00 p.m. Special Board meetings are usually held on the second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. If you are a Division parent, resident or student you may appear before the Board to make a presentation. Delegations are received at Special Board meetings only. Sometimes, due to holidays, the Board of Trustees will change the date of a meeting.

### **Are all matters the Board deals with dealt with in open session?**

The Board deals with all issues in public session except those involving students, personnel, negotiations, contracts, legal matters, etc. For those matters discussion would be held in camera, that is, the general public may not be present.

All recommendations discussed in camera must be voted on in public session.

The Winnipeg School Division  
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# Your school board: the role of trustees



April 2005

Investing in the Future

**T**he Board of Trustees of the Winnipeg School Division is comprised of nine trustees, who are elected for a four-year term. Elections are held in conjunction with municipal elections.

School trustees are elected officials whose prime responsibility is to function as a board to set policy regarding the provision of educational services. The Board of Trustees sets policy through the decisions it makes at public meetings.

The Winnipeg School Division has three wards, with three trustees elected per ward. Once elected, all nine trustees represent the Division as a whole, not only their own ward.

Individual trustees have the right to speak and vote on matters presented at Board meetings. Individual trustees cannot make decisions to take action.

An individual trustee may wish the Board to take action on a particular topic and can present a motion on the subject to the Board. The motion may be discussed after it is seconded by another trustee. Action will be taken only if approved by the majority of the trustees.

Trustees must work together co-operatively in order to achieve their goals.

Preparing for and participating in school board and committee meetings are important roles of a school trustee. Trustees receive an extensive package of materials they review prior to each meeting.

Trustees need to keep informed about local, provincial and national developments that may affect education.

Trustees are invited to attend a wide variety of school and/or Division events, functions and meetings to represent the Division and/or to learn about the schools.

#### **Role of the Chair:**

The chair of the Board maintains order and proper conduct and decorum at meetings. He or she is also a voting member.

The chair is the official spokesperson of the Board and presents the majority position of the Board. The chair also represents the Board at public functions.

#### **Role of the Vice Chair:**

In the absence of the chair, the vice-chair acts for him or her. During Board meetings, the vice chair usually chairs the committee of the whole.

#### **Role of the Committees:**

The Winnipeg School Board has several committees that meet to discuss items that come under their specific terms of reference.

Committees make recommendations to the Board for consideration. They cannot make decisions or act without the approval of the Board.

